



# Michigan Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs

## Strategic Plan 2007-2011



**Jennifer M. Granholm**  
Governor



**Robert W. Swanson**  
Director

Department of  
Labor & Economic



# Michigan Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs

**José L R. Reyna**

Kent County  
Commission Chair

**Danette Duron-Willner**

Oakland County  
Commission Vice-Chair

**Arminda Garcia**

Genesee County  
Commission Secretary

**Benjamin “Danny” Inquilla**

Allegan County  
Commission Trustee

**Ana Gabriel**

Oakland County  
Commissioner

**Esmeralda Rodriguez**

Oceana County  
Commissioner

**Debra Rivera-Ehrmann**

Oakland County  
Commissioner

**Henry Sanchez**

Ionia County  
Commissioner

**Michael Espinoza**

Saginaw County  
Commissioner

**Luisa Inez Schumacher**

Kent County  
Commissioner

**George Fierro**

Allegan County  
Commissioner

**Dr. Maria del Carmen Soto**

Jackson County  
Commissioner

**Frederick Feliciano**

Wayne County  
Commissioner

**Alicia Villarreal**

Wayne County  
Commissioner

Michigan  
Commission  
on  
Spanish Speaking  
Affairs

5 Year Strategic Plan

2007 – 2011

# **Michigan Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs**

Strategic Plan Background  
2007 - 2011

## **PURPOSE OF COSSA**

The purpose of the Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs (COSSA) is to develop a unified policy and plan of action to serve the needs of Michigan's Hispanic people. Public Act 164 of 1975 directs the Commission to:

1. Advise the Governor, the Legislature, and the office concerning the coordination and administration of State programs serving Hispanics.
2. Make recommendations to the Governor and the legislature regarding changes in State programs, statutes, and policies.
3. Advise the Governor and the Legislature of the nature, magnitude, and priorities of the problems concerning Hispanic people.
4. Review and approve grants to be made from federal, state, or private funds, which are administered by the office.
5. Secure appropriate recognition of Hispanic accomplishments and contributions to the State.
6. Review and approve the Annual Report prepared by the Office of Spanish Speaking Affairs.

We, the Commission and staff, have assumed an incredible responsibility on behalf of the Hispanics in Michigan to serve them by providing advice to the Governor and legislature on issues and programs. COSSA has the opportunity and responsibility to refine our Strategic Plan in the context of our purpose.

Our 2006 Strategic Plan included four key areas within our plan; Economic Development, Education, Leadership and Civic Engagement, and Legislative Advocacy. We will prepare and issue an annual report to reflect on our efforts and achievements against the objectives and milestones contained within the COSSA Strategic Plan 2006.

We have also reviewed the Strategic Plan to ensure that we are focusing on the right issues, directing our energies and resources towards the appropriate objectives and milestones, and fulfilling our purpose as the Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs. Therefore, the Commission has revised the Strategic Plan to include four key areas; Economic Development, Education, Health, and Legislative Advocacy and Civic Engagement. Included within each of the focus areas are general objectives and annual milestones that COSSA plans to achieve.

## **VISION OF HISPANICS FOR MICHIGAN**

**COSSA Mission Statement:** Promoting the diverse interests of Hispanics in Michigan to have lives that are abundant with opportunity.

Nearly three years ago I sat with members of an earlier Commission and drafted the COSSA Mission Statement. We had lively discussion about the statement, the plan, and the milestones. It was a much different Commission then; we have been energized by Commissioners that are fiercely passionate and committed to serve the Hispanic community. I am privileged to serve alongside each of them.

During the 2006 Hispanic Heritage Month I was asked what was different about Hispanics from my parent's generation, my generation, and my children's generation. It is a very intriguing question and I hope you think about as well. My response that the goal of my parent's generation was to be invisible; to fly under the radar and not make waves, to fit in without standing out, to stay out of trouble and be grateful for what they got. The vision of my generation was the recognition of an emerging population that was teeming with promise and potential by way of; tremendous population growth, increase in leadership, significant social and political power, and economic strength that would have the business sector speaking Spanish. And the promise of my children's generation is that we would have taken every opportunity to create a better world, not just for Hispanics, but for all; we owe it to those that come after us the assurance of success that results from hard work, the ability to influence decisions that affect their lives, and the legacy of greatness of those that have paved the way for an extraordinary quality of life.

COSSA has the responsibility to create a Strategic Plan. In doing so, we have the opportunity to determine what the most critical issues are for Hispanics and we have the responsibility to do something about them. We will hear and we should talk about educational attainment and success, economic development and employment, voter registration, voter participation, political leadership, legislative influence, health care, crime, housing, cultural competence, and many other issues.

We should also keep in mind the context of our work. The Hispanic population is the fastest growing group in the nation, it has flexed its economic strength by starting up businesses at a rate of 3 to 1 to other groups, it has surfaced in education by representing 11% of all undergraduate college students, and the giant was stirred from its political slumber by the attack on our immigrant brothers and sisters.

On the other hand, the Hispanic population remains underemployed and underpaid. Too many are failing or being failed by our schools and are dropping out. Our political potential has yet to be realized and our voting participation is dismally low and keeping from us gaining political respect and influence.

Michigan Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs Strategic Plan

DRAFT – February 6, 2007

Page 5 of 11

Hispanics have a disproportionate risk of diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and other chronic illness and they lack adequate health care and insurance to access services that would minimize the risk or treat the illnesses. The recent passage of Proposal 2 is a signal that there are many that resent the protection of minorities (including Hispanics) and females from discrimination.

The Hispanic population, despite its potential, is currently faced with critical challenges and COSSA members have been appointed and accepted the responsibility to actively engage to address those challenges. The positive point is that we don't have to do it alone. Our Governor is committed to hear our concerns, take our advice, and consider implementation of our solutions. I pleased Governor Granholm remains our ally for our causes. She knows that what is good for Michigan Hispanics in good for everyone in Michigan.

I thank the members of COSSA for dedicating their time, passion, and for their promise to work in the future for the interest of Hispanics in Michigan.

Three years ago we drafted a mission statement that is excellent and poses a continuing challenge. We have taken some little steps in fulfilling that mission. It's time to begin taking some big steps.

*Juntos, vamos a progresar.*

José L. R. Reyna, Chairperson  
Michigan Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs

**Priority Area: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Committee Chairperson: TBD**

**By 2011, Hispanics in Michigan will have lives that are abundant with opportunities. The commission will work to ensure:**

- Promote economic development and entrepreneurial opportunities for Hispanics
- Increased economic influence by Hispanics in Michigan
- Increase the personal financial strength of Hispanics

**Ongoing Milestones:**

- COSSA will participate in a successful business forum.
- COSSA will partner with business organizations to promote economic development opportunities for Hispanics
- Distribute information to media on Hispanic business achievements and events
- Promote new Hispanic business developments
- COSSA will participate in two Hispanic business Expos attracting Hispanic entrepreneurs
- Present the Hispanic Entrepreneur of the Year Award
- Increase awareness of Hispanics in the area of personal finance

**Annual Milestones:**

**2007:**

- Collaborate to sponsor a business forum for Hispanics in Michigan
- Increase awareness of impact of Proposal 2 on state and local government procurement programs
- Enhance personal finance strength through home ownership and other personal investment opportunities
- Establish and maintain Hispanic business to business relationships
- Analyze trends in the workforce to ensure future generations are prepared to access opportunities in the workforce

**2008:**

- Collaboratively evaluate the impact of Proposal 2 on MWBE programs, specifically to Hispanic business
- Develop and distribute an economic development report, including new business development by Hispanics
- Improve business forums based on evaluation feedback

**2009 - 2011**

- Continuation of ongoing and annual milestones

**Achievement will be measured by:**

- Numbers of persons participating in the business forums
- Number of new Hispanic businesses
- Amount of net revenue produced by Hispanic businesses
- Level of economic impact of Hispanics

**Priority Area: EDUCATION**  
**Committee Chairperson: Commissioner Arminda Garcia**

**By 2011, Hispanics in Michigan will have lives that are abundant with opportunities. The commission will work to ensure:**

- Increase educational achievement by all Hispanic students from pre-kindergarten through college graduates
- Increase the number of Hispanics entering into the educational profession as teachers and administrators

**Ongoing Milestones**

- Participate in the Hispanic Heritage Scholarship Awards Selection Committee for high school graduates.
- Meet with representatives of the Department of Education, at least twice each the year, regarding opportunities or issues regarding Hispanic student achievement
- Collaborate with educational institutions and organizations to increase Hispanic student achievement

**Annual Milestones:**

**2007:**

- Co-convene a meeting with the Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction and invite Superintendents from districts with high Hispanic student concentration
- Identify partners interested in increasing Hispanic academic achievement to collaborate with statewide
- Identify 10 communities with the highest Hispanic student concentration
- Co-Sponsor Education Fairs in the 10 communities with the highest Hispanic student concentration

**2008:**

- Implement strategies for increased Hispanic parental involvement in supporting their child's education
- Increase the number of Hispanic students entering into education related curriculums in colleges and universities
- Evaluate the impact of the Michigan Promise Award to Hispanic students

**2009- 2011:**

- Analyze and report on the impact of Proposal 2 on college entrance programs by Hispanic students
- Evaluate the impact of the Michigan Promise Award to Hispanic students
- Continuation of ongoing and annual milestones

**Achievement will be measured by:**

- Level of Hispanic student achievement in pre-kindergarten through college programs
- Level of Hispanic parent involvement in their child's education
- The number of Hispanic students awarded the Michigan Promise Scholarship
- Number of Hispanic students entering into a education curriculum with the emphasis on teaching or administration
- Amount of resources allocated for Hispanic student achievement



**Priority Area: HEALTH**

**Committee Chairperson: Commissioner TBD**

**By 2011, Hispanics in Michigan will have lives that are abundant with opportunities. The commission will work to ensure:**

- Increase access to health services by Hispanics
- Increase wellness of the Hispanic population
- Increase outreach to the Hispanic community regarding health issues and available services

**Ongoing Milestones:**

- Develop and distribute a report on the condition of health of Hispanics in Michigan
- Develop and maintain relationships with health service agencies, including state departments to promote outreach and access to services by Hispanics
- Increase the cultural competency of health service providers and agencies to serve the Hispanic population
- Increase the number of Hispanics entering in the health sciences professions

**2007:**

- Develop and distribute a report on the general condition of health of Hispanics
- Establish relationships with health care providers, including state departments to develop strategies in improving health for Hispanics
- Develop and pilot a cultural competence training program for health care providers
- Identify and prioritize key health issues of Hispanics

**2008:**

- Compile and evaluate the variation of access of health care services by Hispanics
- Develop and pilot programs targeting key health issues of Hispanics
- Compile data from colleges and university on level of enrollment of Hispanics enter health science programs
- Evaluate and improve cultural competence program for health care providers

**2009 - 2011:**

- Continuation of ongoing and annual milestones

**Achievement will be measured by:**

- Improvement in the general health of Hispanics
- Level of access to health services by Hispanics
- Level of outreach by health service providers and state health agencies
- Number of Hispanics enrolled in health science programs

**Priority Area:       LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

**By 2011, Hispanics in Michigan will have lives that are abundant with opportunities. The commission will work to ensure:**  
Legislation that:

- Positively impacts the Hispanic community will be approved
- Negatively impacts the Hispanic community will be rejected

Capacity will be increased for Hispanic leadership to serve on public boards and commissions and in elected positions

**Ongoing Milestones:**

- Advise the Governor and legislature on issues and programs impacting the Hispanic Community in Michigan
- Establish and maintain a network for achieving legislative goals
- Maintain a legislative agenda
- Establish positive and effective relationships with officials and key stakeholders.
- Develop and present position statements on key public issue affecting the Hispanic community.
- Develop and present legislative recommendations for legislators on issues and initiatives that impact the Hispanic community
- Serve as a appointment referral source for local and state board and commission candidates
- Identify and promote leadership development programs
- Develop and distribute a report on Hispanic leaders within the state (local, county, and state officials)
- Identify and promote opportunities for civic engagement
- Conduct an annual Michigan Hispanic Leadership Institute

**Annual Milestones:**

**2007**

- Conduct legislative “meet and greet” events
- Effectively communicate advocacy positions to the Hispanic community
- Build strong relationships with key public officials in areas of high Hispanic population
- Establish and maintain relationships with Legislative Leadership
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with key State Legislative Liaisons
- Increase participation by Hispanics in training as candidates for elective office and campaign managers
- Identify and recruit Leadership Development Training program participants
- Identify and secure funding sources/sponsorship for the civic engagement initiatives, including the Leadership Development Training program

**2008**

- Continue with ongoing and 2007 milestones
- Improve Leadership Development Training program per the evaluation process
- Monitor and report impact on civic engagement resulting from milestone activities

**2009 – 2011**

Continuation of ongoing and annual milestones

Achievement will be measured by:

- Rate of approval or rejection of legislation that impacts Hispanic population
- Number of board and commission appointments of Hispanics
- Numbers of persons participating in Leadership Development Training programs
- Number of Hispanics seeking elective office or managing political campaigns
- Number of voter registration and participation by Hispanics